

Message Text

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53

ACTION EUR-25

INFO OCT-01 ADP-00 PM-07 NSC-10 SS-15 RSC-01 L-03 EB-11

PA-03 PRS-01 USIA-15 CIAE-00 INR-10 NSAE-00 RSR-01

/103 W

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P R 310920Z JUL 73

FM AMEMBASSY VALLETTA

TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 4596

SECDEF WASHDC PRIORITY

INFO CINCEUR

CINCUSNAVEUR

COMSIXTHFLT

CFT 67

NAF SIGONELLA

DIA WASHDC

C O N F I D E N T I A L VALLETTA 1562

E. 9. 11652: GDS

TAGS: MARR, MILI, MT

SUBJ: USN AIRCRAFT EMERGENCY LANDING IN MALTA

1. FOLLOWING IS DATT REPORT ON SUBJ:

A. AT 2300 ON 30 JUL DATT WAS INFORMED BY RAF SOURCE THAT AN S2F TRACKER AIRCRAFT, BASED AT SIGONELLA, HAD DIVERTED TO LUQA AND HAD LANDED AT ABOUT 2242, DATT PROCEEDED TO LUQA AND MET MALCOLM CRAIG, THE PRIME MINISTER'S MILITARY AIDE, WHO HAD BEEN ASSIGNED BY MINTOFF PERSONALLY TO "GET THEM FED, PROVIDE QUARTERS AT ST. PATRICK'S BARRACKS, AND LET THEM TAKE OFF AS SOON AS POSSIBLE THE NEXT MORNING." THE PM DID NOT WANT ANYTHING THAT MIGHT BE CONSIDERED OPERATIONAL (8.E., SUPPLIES OR EQUIPMENT ITEMS) TAKEN FROM THE AIRCRAFT, BUT CREW WERE PERMITTED TO BRING PERSONAL ITEMS WITH THEM. THE AIRCRAFT SIDE NUMBER WAS 136658, COMMANDED BY LTJG BIBIC, WHO ADVISED DATT THE DIVERT WAS DUE TO EXTREMELY POOR WEATHER.

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B. RAF LUQA HAD FOLLOWED ROUTINE PROCEDURES AND

INFORMED THE DIRECTOR OF CIVIL AVIATION WHEN THE TRACKER LANDED, AND ADVISED THAT THE RAF WAS PREPARED TO TAKE CARE OF THEM. THE DCA ASKED THEM TO WAIT, AND SHORTLY AFTER ADVISED THE RAF THEY (GOM) WOULD TAKE CARE OF THEM.

C. IMMIGRATION AUTHORITIES WERE MOST FRIENDLY. NO EFFORT WAS MADE TO KEEP DATT FROM THE CREW, OR MONITOR OUR CONVERSATION. MILITARY AND CIVIL POLICE WERE ASSIGNED TO GUARD THE AIRCRAFT OVERNIGHT. THE AIRCRAFT WAS REFUELED AND

DEPARTED AT 0720 ON 31 JUL WITHOUT FURTHER INCIDENT.

2. GOM DEPARTMENT OF INFORMATION ISSUED IMMEDIATE RELEASE REPORTING ARRIVAL OF AIRCRAFT AND STRESSING THAT GOM PERMITTED TI TO LAND AND REFUEL ON "HUMANITARIAN GROUNDS" AND THAT "ALL PRECAUTIONS TAKEN TO PREVENT THIS LANDING FROM BEING OPERATIONAL OR BEING CONSTRUED AS SUCH." JULY 31 LOCAL PAPERS CARRIED RELEASE WITHOUT COMMENT.
GETZ

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NNN

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30 JUN 2005

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